

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-18, which were all of the then pending claims, under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,544,294 (Greenfield, et al.). Claims 1-12 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101, as being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The rejection of Claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. 101 is respectfully traversed. Independent Claims 1, 7 and 13 are being amended to better define the subject matters of these claims. Claim 2 is being cancelled because the features thereof are being added to Claim 1, and Claim 3 is being amended to maintain proper dependency among the claims. Also, new independent Claim 19 is being added to present an independent claim of intermediate scope, and Claim 20, which is dependent from Claim 19, is being added to describe a preferred feature of the invention.

For the reasons discussed below, Claims 1 and 3-12 are directed to statutory subject matter, and all of Claims 1 and 3-20 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. The Examiner is thus respectfully asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1 and 3-12 under 35 U.S.C. 101 and the rejection of Claims 1 and 3-18 under 35 U.S.C. 103, and to allow Claims 1 and 3-20.

The instant invention, generally, relates to the display of data tables having plural or multi-level headers. As discussed in detail in the present application, one common type of table found in a variety of hardware/software computer systems is the categorization table. This type of table organizes data under successive and expandable levels of categorized headings. With many conventional database management programs, it is difficult or time consuming to manage the data in data tables having multiple levels of headers. In part, this is because the top, or first level, headers may have different numbers of columns beneath them.

The present invention addresses this issue. Generally, this is done, in accordance with this invention, by presenting or re-presenting a given table having plural or multiple header levels as a series of tables, referred to as dummy tables, displayed separately.

With one embodiment of the invention, table columns are grouped into different levels for subsequent multiple level operations. Sub-columns are provided within a single table column, with that table column and each of the sub-columns having an associated header. Multiple dummy tables are established and displayed separately, on different locations, with one of the dummy tables including one or more of the associated headers. Preferably, that one of the dummy tables includes the header associated with the table column, and a second of the dummy tables includes the headers associated with the sub-columns. These two dummy tables are separately moveable and positionable on the display screen or device.

In a preferred embodiment, a first dummy table is created, which does not have data cells, to show only the headers of the original table, and this dummy table is placed at a first location on a display screen. A second dummy table is created with the data cells of the original table, and this second dummy table does not have any headers. The two dummy tables are then positioned on the display screen so that the headers are above the appropriate data cells. These two dummy tables, also, are separately moveable and positionable on the display screen or device.

The rejection of Claims 1 and 3-18 under 35 U.S.C. 101 is respectfully traversed. In rejection these claims under 35 U.S.C. 101, the Examiner noted that independent Claims 1 and 7 do not appear to be directed to any of the technological arts. 35 U.S.C. 101, though, does not contain any "technological arts" requirement. Instead, the statute requires that the claims be directed to a process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter. Claim 1, and Claims 3-6,

which are dependent from Claim 1, are directed to a method for grouping columns of data, which is a process within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. 101. Claim 7 and Claims 8-12, which are dependent from Claim 7, are directed to a system for displaying a table, which is a machine within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. 101.

The Examiner, in rejecting Claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. 101, also noted that these claims are not tied to a computer. However, there is no requirement in 35 U.S.C. 101 that any particular claims be "tied" to a computer. Moreover, Claims 1 and 7 both describe the feature of displaying dummy tables on a display screen or device. This displaying is a practical, tangible and useful result, and, with this feature, the claims come within the ambit of 35 U.S.C. 101.

In light of the above-discussion, the Examiner is asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1 and 3-12 under 35 U.S.C. 101.

In addition, Claims 1 and 3-20 patentably distinguish over the prior art because the prior art does not show or suggest the separately moveable and positionable dummy tables, as described in independent Claims 1, 7, 13 and 19.

For example, Greenfield, et al. discloses a procedure for creating graphical representations of events such as screenplays, speeches or multimedia works. This graphical representation visually displays a presentation metric of events and the temporal relationships between events. Events may be subsets of other events, and the graphical representations of the events may be moved around a display screen to show visually how the timing relationships between the events may be changed. . Figure 10 of Greenfield, et al, which was specifically cited by the Examiner, shows a user interface screen having a time line display area and identifying a series of time related events, specifically acts and scenes of a play.

There is an important generally difference between Greenfield, et al. and the present invention. Specifically, Greenfield, et al. is directed primarily to organizing a series of events, and, in particular, to developing a visual display to help organize a series of events. The present invention, in contrast, is directed to re-presenting a table in a manner that can easily accommodate changes to that table.

This general difference between Greenfield, et al. and the present invention is reflected in a number of more specific differences. For instance, Greenfield, et al. does not show or suggest forming two, separate header dummy tables that are separately moveable and positionable on the display screen. Nor does Greenfield, et al. teach the principal of forming separate header and data dummy tables, which are separately moveable and positionable on the display screen.

Independent Claims 1, 7, 13 and 18 describe this feature that the dummy tables are separately moveable and positionable on a display screen or device. In particular, Claim 1 describes the feature that the one of the dummy tables, which includes the header associated with the table column, and the second of the dummy tables, which includes the headers of the sub-columns, are separately moveable and positionable on a display screen.

Also, independent Claims 7, 13 and 18 describe a header dummy table holding headers of the original table, and a data dummy table holding the data cells of the original table. These claims additionally describe the feature that these two dummy tables are separately moveable and positionable on a display screen or device.


These features are of utility because, as explained in detail in the present application, they provide improved usability to the user by allowing the original table to be manipulated within the boundaries established by the multiple header levels. This, in turn, allows each user to customize their view of the data in the way that best suites their needs.

The other references of record have been reviewed, and these other references, whether considered individually or in combination, also do not teach or suggest these feature of the present invention.

Because of the above-discussed differences between Claims 1, 7, 13 and 19 and the prior art, and because of the advantages associated with these differences, Claims 1, 7, 13 and 19 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claims 3-6 are dependent from Claim 1 and are allowable therewith; and Claims 8-12 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 7. Similarly, Claims 14-18 are dependent from Claim 13 and are allowable therewith; and Claim 20 is dependent from, and is allowable with, Claim 19. The Examiner is, accordingly, respectfully asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1 and 3-18 under 35 U.S.C. 103 and to allow these claims and new Claims 19 and 20.

For the reasons advanced above, the Examiner is requested to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1 and 3-12 under 35 U.S.C. 101 and the rejection of Claims 1 and 3-18 under 35 U.S.C. 103, and to allow claims 1 and 3-20. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants Attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,


John S. Sensny
Registration No.: 28,757
Attorney for Applicants

Scully, Scott, Murphy & Presser, P.C.
400 Garden City Plaza – Suite 300
Garden City, New York 11530
(516) 742-4343

JSS:jy